

# In the United States Court of Federal Claims

## OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS

No. 17-0851V

Filed: November 16, 2018

UNPUBLISHED

JEFFREY LEVINE and TONI ANN  
LEVINE on behalf of A.L., a minor  
child,

Petitioners,

v.

SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES,

Respondent.

Special Processing Unit (SPU); Joint  
Stipulation on Damages; Influenza  
(Flu) Vaccine; Measles Mumps  
Rubella (MMR) Vaccine; Guillain-  
Barre Syndrome (GBS); Annuity

*Diana Lynn Stadelnikas, Maglio Christopher & Toale, PA, Sarasota, FL, for petitioners.  
Gabrielle Manganiello Fielding, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, for  
respondent.*

### **DECISION ON JOINT STIPULATION**<sup>1</sup>

**Dorsey**, Chief Special Master:

On June 23, 2017, petitioners filed a petition for compensation under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. §300aa-10, *et seq.*,<sup>2</sup> (the “Vaccine Act”). Petitioners allege that A.L. suffered Guillain Barre Syndrome (“GBS”) as a result of an influenza vaccine received on November 2, 2015 and a measles mumps rubella vaccine received on December 31, 2015. Petition at 1; Stipulation, filed November 15, 2018, at ¶¶ 1-4. Petitioners further allege that the vaccines were administered in the United States, that A.L. experienced residual effects of this injury for more than six months, and that there has been no prior award or settlement of a civil action for

<sup>1</sup> The undersigned intends to post this decision on the United States Court of Federal Claims' website. **This means the decision will be available to anyone with access to the internet.** In accordance with Vaccine Rule 18(b), petitioners have 14 days to identify and move to redact medical or other information, the disclosure of which would constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy. If, upon review, the undersigned agrees that the identified material fits within this definition, the undersigned will redact such material from public access. Because this unpublished decision contains a reasoned explanation for the action in this case, undersigned is required to post it on the United States Court of Federal Claims' website in accordance with the E-Government Act of 2002. 44 U.S.C. § 3501 note (2012) (Federal Management and Promotion of Electronic Government Services).

<sup>2</sup> National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, Pub. L. No. 99-660, 100 Stat. 3755. Hereinafter, for ease of citation, all “§” references to the Vaccine Act will be to the pertinent subparagraph of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa (2012).

damages on behalf of A.L. as a result of her condition. Petition at 1, 3-4; Stipulation at ¶¶ 3-5. “Respondent denies that the vaccine caused A.L. to suffer from GBS or any other injury ” Stipulation at ¶ 6.

Nevertheless, on November 15, 2018, the parties filed the attached joint stipulation, stating that a decision should be entered awarding compensation. The undersigned finds the stipulation reasonable and adopts it as the decision of the Court in awarding damages, on the terms set forth therein.

Pursuant to the terms stated in the attached Stipulation, **the undersigned awards** the following compensation:

**An amount sufficient to purchase the annuity contract described in paragraph 10 [of the attached stipulation], paid to the life insurance company from which the annuity will be purchased (the “Life Insurance Company”).**

Stipulation at ¶ 8.

This amount represents compensation for all items of damages that would be available under § 15(a). *Id.*

The undersigned approves the requested amount for petitioners’ compensation. In the absence of a motion for review filed pursuant to RCFC Appendix B, the clerk of the court is directed to enter judgment in accordance with this decision.<sup>3</sup>

**IT IS SO ORDERED.**

**s/Nora Beth Dorsey**  
Nora Beth Dorsey  
Chief Special Master

---

<sup>3</sup> Pursuant to Vaccine Rule 11(a), entry of judgment can be expedited by the parties’ joint filing of notice renouncing the right to seek review.

IN THE UNITED STATES COURT OF FEDERAL CLAIMS

OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS

JEFFREY LEVINE and TONI ANN LEVINE	)	
on behalf of A.L., a minor,	)	
	)	
Petitioners,	)	
v.	)	No. 17-851V
	)	Chief Special Master Dorsey
SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN	)	
SERVICES,	)	
	)	
Respondent.	)	

STIPULATION

The parties hereby stipulate to the following matters:

1. On behalf of their daughter, A.L., petitioners filed a petition for vaccine compensation under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. §300aa-10 to 34 (the "Vaccine Program"). The petition seeks compensation for injuries allegedly related to A.L.'s receipt of the influenza ("flu") and/or Measles, Mumps, and Rubella ("MMR") vaccines, which vaccines are contained in the Vaccine Injury Table (the "Table"), 42 C.F.R. § 100.3 (a).
2. A.L. received her immunizations on November 2, 2015 and December 31, 2015, respectively.
3. The vaccines were administered within the United States.
4. Petitioners allege that the vaccines caused A.L. to suffer from Guillain Barre Syndrome ("GBS"), and that A.L. experienced residual effects of this injury for more than six months.
5. Petitioners represent that there has been no prior award or settlement of a civil action for damages on behalf of A.L. as a result of her condition.

6. Respondent denies that the vaccine caused A.L. to suffer from GBS or any other injury.

7. Maintaining their above-stated positions, the parties nevertheless now agree that the issues between them shall be settled and that a decision should be entered awarding the compensation described in paragraph 8 of this Stipulation.

8. As soon as practicable after an entry of judgment reflecting a decision consistent with the terms of this Stipulation, and after petitioners have filed an election to receive compensation pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-21(a)(1), the Secretary of Health and Human Services will issue the following vaccine compensation payment for all damages that would be available under 42 U.S.C. §300aa-15(a):

An amount sufficient to purchase the annuity contract described in paragraph 10 below, paid to the life insurance company from which the annuity will be purchased (the "Life Insurance Company").

9. The Life Insurance Company must have a minimum of \$250,000,000.00 capital and surplus, exclusive of any mandatory security valuation reserve. The Life Insurance Company must have one of the following ratings from two of the following rating organizations:

- a. A.M. Best Company: A++, A+, A+g, A+p, A+r, or A+s;
- b. Moody's Investor Service Claims Paying Rating: Aa3, Aa2, Aa1, or Aaa;
- c. Standard and Poor's Corporation Insurer Claims-Paying Ability Rating: AA-, AA, AA+, or AAA;
- d. Fitch Credit Rating Company, Insurance Company Claims Paying Ability Rating: AA-, AA, AA+, or AAA.

10. The Secretary of Health and Human Services agrees to purchase an annuity contract from the Life Insurance Company for the benefit of A.L., pursuant to which the Life Insurance

Company will agree to make a certain lump sum payment to A.L. for all damages that would be available under 42 U.S.C. §300aa-15(a), as follows:

\$67,876.68 payable in a certain lump sum on August 6, 2028.

The payment provided for in this paragraph 10 shall be made as set forth above. Should A.L. predecease the certain lump sum payment set forth above, the certain lump sum payment shall be made to her estate. Written notice to the Secretary of Health and Human Services and to the Life Insurance Company shall be provided within twenty (20) days of A.L.'s death.

11. The annuity contract will be owned solely and exclusively by the Secretary of Health and Human Services and will be purchased as soon as practicable following the entry of a judgment in conformity with this Stipulation. The parties stipulate and agree that the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the United States of America are not responsible for the payment of any sums other than the amount set forth in paragraph 8 herein and the amounts awarded pursuant to paragraph 12 herein, and that they do not guarantee or insure any of the future annuity payments. Upon the purchase of the annuity contract, the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the United States of America are released from any and all obligations with respect to future annuity payments.

12. As soon as practicable after the entry of judgment on entitlement in this case, and after petitioners have filed both a proper and timely election to receive compensation pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-21(a)(1), and an application, the parties will submit to further proceedings before the special master to award reasonable attorneys' fees and costs incurred in proceeding upon this petition.

13. Petitioners and their attorney represent that compensation to be provided pursuant to this Stipulation is not for any items or services for which the Program is not primarily liable

under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(g), to the extent that payment has been made or can reasonably be expected to be made under any State compensation programs, insurance policies, Federal or State health benefits programs (other than Title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. § 1396 et seq.)), or by entities that provide health services on a pre-paid basis.

14. Payments made pursuant to paragraph 8 and any amounts awarded pursuant to paragraph 12 of this Stipulation will be made in accordance with 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(i), subject to the availability of sufficient statutory funds.

15. The parties and their attorneys further agree and stipulate that, except for any award for attorneys' fees and litigation costs, the money provided pursuant to this Stipulation either immediately or as part of the annuity contract, will be used solely for the benefit of A.L. as contemplated by a strict construction of 42 U.S.C. §300aa-15(a) and (d), and subject to the conditions of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(g) and (h).

16. In return for the payments described in paragraphs 8 and 12, petitioners, in their individual capacities and as legal representatives of A.L., on behalf of themselves, A.L., and her heirs, executors, administrators, successors or assigns, do forever irrevocably and unconditionally release, acquit and discharge the United States and the Secretary of Health and Human Services from any and all actions or causes of action (including agreements, judgments, claims, damages, loss of services, expenses and all demands of whatever kind or nature) that have been brought, could have been brought, or could be timely brought in the Court of Federal Claims, under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. § 300 aa-10 et seq., on account of, or in any way growing out of, any and all known or unknown, suspected or unsuspected personal injuries to or death of A.L. resulting from, or alleged to have resulted from, the vaccinations administered on November 2, 2015 and December 31, 2015, respectively, as

alleged by petitioners in a petition for vaccine compensation filed on or about June 23, 2017, in the United States Court of Federal Claims as petition No. 17-851V.

17. If A.L. should die prior to entry of judgment, this agreement shall be voidable upon proper notice to the Court on behalf of either or both of the parties.

18. If the special master fails to issue a decision in complete conformity with the terms of this Stipulation or if the Court of Federal Claims fails to enter judgment in conformity with a decision that is in complete conformity with the terms of this Stipulation, then the parties' settlement and this Stipulation shall be voidable at the sole discretion of either party.

19. This Stipulation expresses a full and complete negotiated settlement of liability and damages claimed under the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, as amended, except as otherwise noted in paragraph 12 above. There is absolutely no agreement on the part of the parties hereto to make any payment or to do any act or thing other than is herein expressly stated and clearly agreed to. The parties further agree and understand that the award described in this Stipulation may reflect a compromise of the parties' respective positions as to liability and/or amount of damages, and further, that a change in the nature of the injury or condition or in the items of compensation sought, is not grounds to modify or revise this agreement.

20. Petitioners hereby authorize respondent to disclose documents filed by petitioners in this case consistent with the Privacy Act and the routine uses described in the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program System of Records, No. 09-15-0056.

21. This Stipulation shall not be construed as an admission by the United States or the Secretary of Health and Human Services that the flu and MMR vaccines caused A.L. to suffer GBS or any other injury or condition.

22. All rights and obligations of petitioners hereunder shall apply equally to petitioners' heirs, executors, administrators, successors, and/or assigns as legal representatives of A.L.

END OF STIPULATION

/

/

/

/

/

/

/

/

/

/

/

/

/

/

/

/

/

/


/

/



Respectfully submitted,

PETITIONER:

  
 JEFFREY LEVINE


PETITIONER:

  
 TONI ANN LEVINE


ATTORNEY OF RECORD FOR  
 PETITIONERS:

  
 DIANA L. STADELNIKAS, ESQ.  
 Maglio Christopher & Toale, PA  
 1605 Main Street, Suite 710  
 Sarasota, FL 34236  
 Tel: (941) 952-5242

AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE  
 OF THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH  
 AND HUMAN SERVICES:

  
 NARAYAN NAIR, M.D.  
 Director, Division of Injury  
 Compensation Programs  
 Healthcare Systems Bureau  
 U.S. Department of Health  
 and Human Services  
 5600 Fishers Lane  
 Parklawn Building, Mail Stop 11C-26  
 Rockville, MD 20857

AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE  
 OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL:

  
 CATHARINE E. REEVES  
 Deputy Director  
 Torts Branch  
 Civil Division  
 U.S. Department of Justice  
 P.O. Box 146  
 Benjamin Franklin Station  
 Washington, DC 20044-0146

ATTORNEY OF RECORD FOR  
 RESPONDENT:

  
 Hana Alcala Gabrielle Fielding  
 Trial Attorney  
 Torts Branch  
 Civil Division  
 U.S. Department of Justice  
 P.O. Box 146  
 Benjamin Franklin Station  
 Washington, DC 20044-0146  
 Tel: (202) 616-3655

Dated: November 15, 2018